(a) whether it is a fact that Israeli 5.56 Model Tava Assault Rifles are being acquired for the Indian Army Special Forces as part of $ 15 million deal for close encounter weapons;

(b) if so, the likely time involved in their acquisition and use by these Forces; and

(c) whether these weapons will be utilized in countering terrorism in the country?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) A contract for procurement of 5.56 mm Assault Rifles along with certain accessories was signed by Ministry of Defence with an Israeli company at a total cost of US$ 18,074,634.

(b) The supplies of the contracted item have been delayed by the Israeli company due to certain circumstances affecting the sourcing of an item as provided for in the contract and related issues. The matter has been taken up with the vendor to resolve the same.

(c) Such weapons can be utilized for operational reasons as deemed fit by the Army.

Shortage of Men, Materials and Vessels in the Coast Guard

1791. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a significant shortage of men, materials and vessels in the Coast Guard, in India;

(b) if so, whether Government would assure of providing enough men, material and vessels expeditiously to coast guard to face increased challenges to internal security posed by the increasing use of sea-lanes for terrorists movements, gun-running and narcotics smuggling;

(c) whether Government would implement measures in introducing any advanced technology including modern surveillance system to make the Coast Guard function effectively and efficiently;

(d) if so, details of measures proposed to be taken; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) In an expanding organization like the Coast Guard, procurement of equipment and vessels and provision of requisite manpower is an ongoing process. The Coast Guard has been adequately equipped to face the challenges of national security and the role assigned to it by Government. The Government has provided technologically advanced Air Cushion Vessels, Jet propelled Fast Patrol Vessels and Pollution Control Vessels for effective and efficient surveillance by the Coast Guard. Advanced communication systems like Global Maritime Distress and Security System, High Frequency transreceivers and Very Low Frequency receivers are being procured. New Advanced Offshore Patrol Vessels and Offshore Patrol Vessels under procurement will be fitted with digital microprocessor based integrated Platform Management System for effective monitoring and centralized control of the platform.

Jangi Inam

1792. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the practice of bravery award known as Jangi Inam given to the soldiers still continues;

(b) if so, the amount given per month as the bravery award;

(c) whether there is a proposal to increase the amount given to the dependents of soldiers who took part in first and second World Wars; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Jangi Inam is not a bravery award. It was given by the British Government during the First and the Second World Wars for distinguished service. Loyalty to the British Government was also a consideration for which these awards were given. While no new Jangi awards are being given, monetary allowances are still being given to the legal heirs of the erstwhile Jangi Inam Awardees.

(b) Rs. 100/- per month.

(c) No, Sir.